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NSC BRIEFING

Approved For Release 2000/08/29 : CIA-RDP79R00890A000200020015-7

9 December 1953

ITALIAN STRIKE SITUATION

A. Italy is now threatened by new nation-wide strike offensive supported by nearly all labor organizations:

1. The Communist-dominated CGIL, the Christian Democrat-oriented CISL, the neo-fascist CISNAL are prepared for a 24-hour tie up of railways 11 December.
2. CGIL has called strike same day of local government employees and postal and telecommunications workers.
3. CGIL and CISL are pledged to support 24-hour general industrial strike 15 December.

~~a. Adherence of Democratic Socialist sponsored UFF considered inevitable.~~

4. CGIL has threatened second railroad strike 15 December in connection with general industrial strike of same date.

(relatively minor improvements in)
B. Basic issues are wage scales and, in case of telecommunications workers, possible new civil service regulation that would ban future strikes:

1. These worker demands stem from the laboring classes' slowly but steadily worsening economic plight.
2. Most serious aspect of the situation is increasingly close joint action by Communist and non-Communist unions - a tactic not supported by latter between 1947 and the summer of 1953.

C. Serious labor trouble in Italy has been building up for some time:

1. Previously on the initiative of the Christian Democratic CISL, some 5 million Communist and non-Communist industrial workers collaborated in a 24-hour nation-wide general strike on 24 September. This strike was considered 70 to 90 percent effective, but passed

without violence.

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2. Another 24-hour general strike, planned jointly by Communist and non-Communist labor leaders for 20 October, was headed off only by the government's putting pressure on the industrialists' organization to resume bargaining over wage and contract issues.

D. Possible that new developments may deter strikes, particularly rail:

1. Premier Pella met with CISL leader 4 December and has reportedly been studying wage problem of industrial workers.
2. Nevertheless, the industrialists' confederation continues obdurate.

Human Interest (such as it is) ~~Analysis~~

According to the Italian press, the powerful Communist leader Luigi Longo, is now urging Communist labor organizers to forego one of their pet pieces of invective in referring to the Christian Democratic trade unionists ----the word "Crumiro" or "blackleg". This, he said, must now be dropped from the Communist labor vocabulary in the interest of ~~marking~~ "marking class unity."

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Titles of Italian labor organizations

CGIL - Italian General Confederation of Labor (Communist)
CISL - Italian Confederation of Trade Unions (Christian Democratic)
CISNAL - Italian Confederation of National Trade Unions (neo-fascist)
UIL - Italian Labor Union (Democratic Socialist)

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